



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

February 2021

The Municipal EcoLink is a monthly e-bulletin designed to inform you of the latest environmental ideas, trends, grants, rules and more from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). We respectfully request that the following is electronically distributed or otherwise made available to your municipal committees, councils and boards. Please feel free to post it on your municipal website as well. You may read past issues at [The Municipal EcoLink](#).

NHDES Response to COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has caused many of us to do business differently. NHDES has set up a [COVID-19 webpage](#) as a clearinghouse for information related to any changes in NHDES program activity. NHDES will do its best to communicate any changes directly with our program customers and stakeholders, however please check this webpage regularly, as we will update information as necessary.

Asbestos Inspection and Abatement – A Reminder to Municipalities When Issuing Permits for Building Renovations or Demolitions

Under [NH Code Admin. Rule Env-A 1800, Asbestos Management and Control](#), building owners or their contractors are required to provide an asbestos inspection by an asbestos inspector prior to any renovation or demolition work that is not covered by the homeowner exemption of Env-A 1801.03. The owner or contractor is also required to notify the municipality and NHDES of major asbestos abatement projects and any demolitions at least 10 working days prior to the activity. With the spring construction season approaching, building owners and contractors will be applying for building permits. For guidance on asbestos-related requirements, please direct them to [NHDES' Asbestos Program webpage](#), or ask them to contact NHDES' new Asbestos Program Manager, James Tilley, who can be reached at [\(603\) 271-0885](#) or james.tilley@des.nh.gov.

Funds Available Through Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Program

NHDES has approximately \$500,000 of funding available through the EPA's Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) program. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is for a new funding opportunity administered by NHDES through the State Clean Diesel Grant Program. This program provides partial funding for local/state governments and businesses operating in New Hampshire to reduce emissions through idle reduction technologies, exhaust controls and/or replacement of older on- or off-road diesel engines/vehicles/equipment. Under this RFP, Round 1 applications will be accepted through March 8 at 4 PM. If funding remains, proposals submitted between March 8 and March 29, will also be considered, and if funding still remains, proposals submitted between March 29 and April 19 will also be considered. For more information, visit the [NH State Clean Diesel Program webpage](#).

Granite State Clean Cities Coalition (GSCCC) Annual Report Data Request

GSCCC is seeking municipal transportation data for the 2020 Annual Report. In GSCCC's 2019 Annual Report, New Hampshire fleets, businesses, schools/universities, towns and cities reduced petroleum use in transportation by 1,302,093 gallons and greenhouse gas emissions by 7,423 tons! We know that 2020 was very different and we want to report the impact. We need your help if your fleets, businesses, or municipality uses 1) alternative fuels like biodiesel, natural gas or propane in onroad and offroad vehicles and equipment, 2) electric or hybrid vehicles and equipment, or 3) other fuel reduction strategies like telematics, telecommuting, anti-idling policies, etc. Find out more and fill out the questionnaire on [GSCCC's website](#), or contact Jessica Wilcox, GSCCC Coordinator: jessica.wilcox@des.nh.gov or [\(603\) 271-6751](#). Thank you in advance!

Solid Waste Operator Training & Certification Program

As long as the current State of Emergency is in effect for New Hampshire, all solid waste operator certifications fall under the [Emergency Order #29](#). For currently certified SW Operators, this means that they receive an additional 180 days to renew their license and there will be no late fees accepted. If operators do not renew within their 180-day extension in addition to the 90-day statutorily authorized grace period, their certificate is expired and in order to work at the facility, they must submit an [Initial Application](#) and attend [Basic Training](#) to be recertified. Operators are still required to submit [verification](#) of 2.5 hours of continuing professional development hours and the SWOT Program has provide [pre-recorded classes](#) as well as scheduled [NHDES-Hosted SWOT Classes](#) through June. All certificates are to be posted on the wall of the SW Facility and the expiration date is on the certificate. For your convenience, a [list of](#)

[certified operators](#) with their expiration date is also online. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Tara Mae Albert, the SWOT Coordinator at Tara.M.Albert@des.nh.gov or [\(603\) 271-3713](tel:(603)271-3713).

Notice to Solid Waste Facility Owners and Permittees – 2020 Annual Facility Report Forms

The 2020 Annual Facility Report (AFR) and Post-Closure Report (PCR) forms, used for reporting required information regarding the operation or monitoring and maintenance of your solid waste facility (active or inactive) are available on the [Solid Waste Reporting and Compliance webpage](#). **Do not use the 2019 forms to report your data.** Additionally, when you have completed your form(s), the Solid Waste Management Bureau requests that you submit them in PDF via email to solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov or upload via [OneStop](#), when possible. Completed forms are due by March 31, 2021. If you have questions, please contact the SWMB at [\(603\) 271-2925](tel:(603)271-2925).

Training Opportunity on Post-Closure Care of Landfills by NHDES Solid Waste Management Bureau

There are over 250 inactive (closed) landfills in New Hampshire that require post-closure care, including inspection, monitoring and maintenance. In recent years, NHDES has noted that post-closure reports have either not been filed or have been missing important information required by [Env-Sw 800](#) of the Solid Waste Rules. Due to these deficiencies, NHDES staff will be offering two opportunities to provide stakeholders with information that will help address those deficiencies. We strongly recommend facility operators, municipal officials who manage the post-closure activities at municipally-owned landfills, and other interested parties partake in one of the two events. Click on the hyperlinks for more information and to register. [Post-Closure Landfill Monitoring and Maintenance](#) on March 31 from 9:00 AM-Noon and [Landfill Post-Closure Care for Consultants](#) on April 1 from 12:00-1:00 PM. There is no cost for this training, and it will count toward Solid Waste Operator Training credit hours.

2021 Water Infrastructure Financing Webinar Series

The New Hampshire Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) Programs will be hosting the 2021 Water Infrastructure Funding Webinar May 4-13, 2021. The webinar will include a series of 2-hour sessions focusing on funding programs administered by NHDES and topics including funding program updates, crafting warrant articles, green infrastructure, energy efficiency, asset management and more. The intended audience includes current/future loan recipients, community/financial decision makers, public works directors, city/town managers, commissioners, selectmen, municipal and regional planners, consultants/engineers, operators, and others interested in the NHDES-administered funding programs. Registration information and a preliminary agenda will be available soon on the [SRF webpage](#). **Questions/Contacts:** Emily Nichols, NHDES at [\(603\) 271-8320](tel:(603)271-8320) or Emily.Nichols@des.nh.gov; Kathleen Bourret, NHDES at [\(603\) 271-2902](tel:(603)271-2902) or Kathleen.Bourret@des.nh.gov.

Telecommuting and transportation information for Upper Valley Region

Vital Communities, an organization serving the New Hampshire/Vermont Upper Valley Region, has compiled a set of [telecommuting resources](#) to assist staff and community members working remotely. In addition, pre-COVID-19 they had developed a “[Transportation Toolkit for Town Volunteers](#).” Despite the impact that COVID-19 may have had on demand for carpool/vanpool/transit programs, the toolkit is available to guide interested communities in planning for future transportation efficiency improvements.

The New Hampshire Drinking Water Festival will be offered virtually in 2021!

The New Hampshire Drinking Water Festival has educated and inspired fourth-graders to conserve and protect our water resources for 27 years. To keep everyone safe, the 2021 festival is moving online. And, to support teachers, students and parents these free online resources will be available March through July. Major themes include the water cycle, watersheds, groundwater, wildlife and the human water cycle. Lessons connect with student’s daily lives and explore how they can keep water clean. The online lessons and activities are designed for students in grades 3-5, but with the timeless importance of clean water, students in other grades will also benefit from them. Student in grades 3-5 are invited to participate in this year’s Water Poetry Contest. This is a great opportunity to incorporate the language arts and water science. The [Drinking Water Festival’s new website](#) is currently under construction, but it can be found and bookmarked for the virtual event this spring. If you would like to learn more, please contact Lara Hooper at lara.hooper@des.nh.gov.

Drought Concerns Continue

NHDES is strongly urging community water systems and municipalities to make reasonable precautionary preparations for a multi-year drought and for an increase in demand on water systems by vacation homeowners spending more time than usual in the state. For the latest drought conditions and guidance, sign up for [Drought Updates](#) and visit the [NHDES Drought Management webpage](#). The State of New Hampshire has approved a \$1.5 million initiative to provide financial assistance to low-income homeowners on private residential wells that have gone dry or have very little water due to drought conditions. If you have concerned homeowners, direct them to complete [this survey](#) and send an email to droughtwellinfo@des.nh.gov for more information.

The NHDES website got a makeover

On December 8, NHDES launched a new website, complete with an update to the navigation system. All the information you need and want is still there, but is organized in a much more intuitive way, based on environmental topics. There is also a keyword searchable document library that has all NHDES fact sheets, reports, guidance documents, outreach materials and more at your fingertips. The site is fully mobile-ready, making accessing the information you need even easier. If you have trouble finding something or need help of any kind with the new website, please email us at pip@des.nh.gov.

Please send your comments for the editor to editor@des.nh.gov.

To receive press releases and other publications of the NH Department of Environmental Services via email, please sign up [on our newsletter subscription page](#).